

REMARKS

Claims 1, 5, 7 and 11-14 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 7 are amended based on the results of the personal interview. No new matter is added. Reconsideration based on the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representative by Examiner Hayes during the October 7 personal interview. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

Claims 1, 5, 7 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Bowman (U.S. Patent No. 5,999,623) in view of Richards (U.S. Patent No. 6,069,957), Dillon (U.S. Patent No. 5,727,065) and Downs (U.S. Patent No. 6,226,618); and claims 12-14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Bowman in view of Richards, Dillon and Downs, and further in view of Stefik (U.S. Patent No. 5,634,012). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

In particular, neither Bowman, Richards, Dillon, Downs or Stefik, individually or in combination, disclose or suggest at least executing accounting to an end user only if said encrypted content is decrypted and output for printing by the end user, as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly set forth in independent claim 7.

Specifically, Dillon discloses that the receiving computer 110 decrypts the received document if the document was designated by the user and stores billing information about the received documents. The billing information will be transferred back to the broadcast center at a later time. See col. 4, lines 1-20. The billing information details which documents were received during the most recent billing period. The broadcast center 150 decrypts the billing information using a private key and stores the decrypted billing information in a memory 204 to be used later in determining an account status and for actually invoicing the user for documents delivered.

However, Dillon does not at least execute accounting to an end user only if said encrypted content is decrypted and output for printing by the end user.

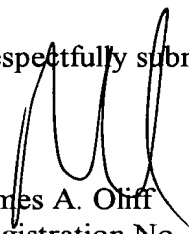
Because the applied references fail to disclose these features, any combination of the applied references would not have resulted in a device with improved distribution of digital contents and a reduction in erroneous accounting data.

Accordingly, independent claims 1 and 7 are patentable over the applied art. Claims 5 and 11-14, which depend from claims 1 and 7 respectively, also are patentable over the applied art for at least the reasons discussed above. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 5, 7 and 11-14 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,


James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Richard S. Elias
Registration No. 48,806

JAO:RSE/eks

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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